

Pritchard Mayor.

*Jovis xxii° Die Februarii 1682.
Annoq; Regis CAROLI Se-
cundi Angl. &c. xxxv°*

THis Court doth desire Doctor
Goodman to Print his Sermon
lately Preached at the *Guild-Hall-Cha-
pel*, before the Lord Mayor, and Al-
dermen of this City.

Wagstaffe.

Pritchard Mayor.

*Jovis xxii^o Die Februarii 1682.
Annoq; Regis CAROLI Se-
cundi Angl. &c. xxxv^o*

THis Court doth desire Doctor
Goodman to Print his Sermon
lately Preached at the *Guild-Hall-Cha-
pel*, before the Lord Mayor, and Al-
dermen of this City.

Wagstaffe.

4

THE E. 11. 74
INTEREST
OF
Divine Providence
IN THE
Government of the World.

A 
SERMON
PREACHED

At *Guild-Hall-Chappel*, before the
Right Honourable the LORD
MAYOR and ALDERMEN
of the CITY of LONDON,
Febr. xi. 1682.

By J. GOODMAN D. D. Chaplain in Ordinary
to His MAJESTY.

L O N D O N,

Printed for *Riab. Royston*, Bookseller to His most
Sacred Majesty. MDC LXXXIII.

THE
 INTEREST
 OF
 THE
 Government of the World

SE-R-MON
 PREACHED

At St. Martin's Church, before the
 Right Honourable the LORD
 MAYOR and Aldermen
 of the CITY of LONDON

1141:90

By J. GOODMAN, D. D. Chaplain in Ordinary
 to His Majesty

LONDON
 Printed for R. A. Rogers, Bookseller to His most
 Sacred Majesty MICHAEL

The Epistle Dedicatory

To the Right Honourable
Sir **WILLIAM PRITCHARD**
LORD MAYOR
OF THE
CITY of **LONDON,**

And to the **COURT** of
ALDERMEN.

My **LORD**, and Gentlemen,
IN Obedience to Your Order I have printed, and
here humbly present to You, the Sermon I lately
Preached before You; and therewith I make my
Acknowledgments of the Respects You have showed me
in the kind Entertainment of my Endeavours to serve
You.

I made choice of the great Doctrine of Provi-
dence for the Subject of my Discourse, as well with
A 3 a peculiar

The Epistle Dedicatory.

a peculiar regard to the distracted condition of the Times we live in; as upon the general account of its perpetual usefulness to all the great purposes of Religion: and I am now confirmed in my Choice by the testimony of your judgments and approbation.

My Lord, Though I live not much in the Air of this busie World, yet a man must be quite out of it that is not sensible, not only of different Apprehensions and Disputes amongst us, but of the most violent passions and animosities, insomuch that no Terms of Reproach are thought virulent enough to bestow upon one another, but we must rake the Sinks of other Countries for odious Nicknames to distinguish Parties, and to perpetuate our Quarrels.

Nor is this the worst of our Case neither, for now at length (as it uses to happen in declining Age) our Choler seems to be turned into Melancholy, and our Anger into Jealousie. We grow suspicious of our best Friends, of our Governours, of our Clergy, of one another. By which means not only Religion is scandalized, but the very Sinews of Society are relaxed, and the strength of the Nation is dissolved.

And what Remedies can be sufficient to recover us from this Condition? It is true we have a Gracious

The Epistle Dedicatory.

cious Prince, but who can preserve a Kingdom divided against it self? We have good Laws, but what can they signifie when they have lost their veneration? We have a great many Good Men, but who will take upon him to make peace, when he that parts the Fray is likely to receive the most Blows, and he that pretends to be a common Friend (to the angry Parties) shall be-treated as the common Enemy? In a word, we seem to be very near that condition which the Historian bewails in his own Country, *Nec Morbos, nec Remedia pati possumus*; We can neither subsist without a Cure, nor yet will admit of the Remedies.

Now, My Lord, my Text affords us hope even in this condition. It brings into view a mighty Majesty, able to awe men into a composure: It gives us assurance that we are under his Government, who can cool our Heats, allay our Passions, prevent our Fears, and cure our Melancholy. Almighty Providence can turn the hearts of men, change the Scene of things, and make a Tempest become a Calm. And that in his own good time he will do this for us, we have encouragement to expect from the former experience we have had of his Goodness, and upon the interest of the Protestant Religion, that Vine which his own right hand hath planted amongst us.

Now

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Now that it may please him to effect this in our days, and to make Your Lordship, and the rest of the Worthy Magistrates of this City (in their several Places) instrumental in so happy a Work, is the hearty Prayer of

Your Lordship's

March 5.
1682.

Most Humble Servant,

JO. GOODMAN.

(1)
A
S E R M O N
P R E A C H E D
Before the Right Honourable
T H E
Lord M A Y O R and A L D E R M E N
Of the C I T Y of
L O N D O N.

P S A L M xcvii. Verse 1.

*The Lord reigneth, let the Earth re-
joice; let the multitude of the Isles
be glad thereof.*

WHether this Psalm was penned
by *Moses* upon occasion of the
Victory obtained over *Sihon*
King of *Heshbon*, as the first O-
men of *Israel's* success in the conquest of the
promised Land? (as the Jewish writers think)

B

Or,

Or, Whether it was composed by *David* upon the recovery of his Throne and Kingdom, when the conspiracy of *Absalom* was defeated ? (as the Greek Interpreters seem to intimate) Or lastly, Whether the same *David* indited it, upon the huge enlargement of his Dominions, by the addition of all those bordering Countries, his Conquest whereof we have recorded 1 *Chron.* 18. (as seems most probable.)

It is however certain in the general, that the Psalm is an Hymn of Praise to the Divine Majesty, and a devout acknowledgment of his power and providence in the management of the affairs of the World. And like as at the inauguration of some virtuous and brave Prince, or especially upon some glorious specimen or instance of his Wisdom and Prowess in the conduct of Affairs, it is usual for the people to make mighty shouts and acclamations : So here is the shout of a King in my Text, and all the World is summoned to celebrate the glories of this great Monarch *Jehovah*. *The Lord reigneth, let the Earth rejoice ; let the multitude of the Isles be glad thereof.*

By the *Earth*, I understand the Land of *Canaan* and bordering Countries, the Territory of the Church. By the *multitude of the Isles*, I conceive

conceive is meant all the remoter parts of the World; for by that name the Jews in their language were wont to call all but the Continent on which they inhabited, as may appear *Gen. 10. 5.* where speaking of the posterity of *Japheth*, the Text saith, *by these were the Isles of the Gentiles divided.*

So the words afford us these two observations :

First, That the Divine Majesty is not a mere necessary Agent or passive Being, or unconcerned Spectator of the Affairs of the World, but manages and governs, as well as observes the course of things.

Secondly, That this Divine Providence and Government of the World, is matter of security and satisfaction, of triumph and rejoicing to all mankind. And that although the Church of God have a principal interest in it, and advantage by it; yet no part of the World is neglected by God, or destitute of a Providence.

And these two shall be the subject of my present discourse. I am well aware that neither of them contain any new Doctrine to entertain and gratifie curiosity; but I am withal very certain, that they represent to us matter

of the greatest usefulness and importance that can be for any times, but most peculiarly seasonable at this time. The Doctrine of a Providence (and especially such an one as the Text speaks of) being the only consideration able to allay our Passions, to abate our Fears, to remove our Jealousies, to cure our Melancholies, and consequently to promote Peace and Settlement both in Church and State. Therefore I shall not doubt either of your patience or attention whilst I give account of these three things.

First, I will shew what is meant by this expression, *the Lord reigneth*.

Secondly, I will demonstrate the truth of the assertion, That God Almighty exerciseth a reigning Providence in the World.

Lastly, I will bring this down to practice, by discovering the great influence this truth hath upon all the interests of mankind.

And by that time I perswade my self you will be ready to make the application in my Text, and give example to the rest of the World, to rejoice that *the Lord is King*.

1. I begin with the first, what is meant by this expression, *the Lord reigneth*.

I cannot imagine that any one that hears me should

should phansie this expression to give countenance to a *Fifth Monarchy* (as they call it) as if such an interest in the Government of the World was hereby asserted to the Divine Majesty, as should repeal or disannul the Authority of Temporal Princes and Potentates; or that they must become Usurpers because God is King. For besides that (as I shall shew anon) they are only Gods Vicegerents and Instruments of his Government; and so being subordinate cannot be repugnant to him: (Besides this I say) it is evident that *David*, who (I suppose) indited this Psalm, reigned at this time as a Temporal Prince, and neither thought his Royalty impeached by the Divine Sovereignty, nor an invasion of the Divine Prerogative.

And as little can I suspect that any should be so unreasonable, as to think that the supposition of a Divine Providence should supersede and discharge the use and efficacy of second causes, for it is a reigning Providence we speak of; now to reign is to command in chief, not to transact all things immediately, to prescribe to and govern, rather than to dispatch business by himself.

That which therefore we are to understand by

by Gods being King, is no more but that *Omne regnum est sub graviore regno*; that the Lord God is Lord Paramount, who though he not only suffers but enables other causes to act under him, yet keeps the reins of Government in his own hand; and consequently can and doth whensoever he pleases, interpose, suspend or controul them, and over-rule all things to his own will and pleasure.

That things are neither carried by the hurry of a blind fortune, or chance as the Epicureans dreamed;

Nor born away with the swinge of fatal necessity, as the Stoicks imagined:

Nor yet left either to the will of man, or the natural efficacy of second causes, but that God sometimes interposes, and always guides and governs them.

This is that which was darkly and figuratively, but elegantly exprest by the Prophet *Ezekiel* in his first Chapter, where the course of second causes is compared to the *Wheels of a Chariot*, which run on in a Road with a mighty carriere; but then v. 18. there are said to be eyes in those *Wheels*, intimating that God takes notice how all things go; and not only so, but v. 20. there is said to be a Spirit that guides

guides and governs all their Motions.

Thus the Lord is King and reigns in the World ; and so much for that point, I pass to the second :

2. Which is to make plain and demonstrative proof of this assertion, that so we may discover a just foundation for that joy and triumph which the Text calls for upon that occasion ; and for this I offer these four following Arguments.

First, I argue from the very nature and notion of a God after this manner : Every man that frames in his mind any worthy notion of the Deity, conceives him to be a Wise, Powerful, Just and Good Being ; and whosoever conceives of him any otherwise, or leaves out any of these Attributes, debases him below the common notion that men have of him, and renders him no fit object of love, or fear, or worship and adoration, (as I shall shew more anon.)

Now he that denies such a Providence as we have explained, denies to the Deity all those perfections at once ; and in so doing forfeits and forgoes the most natural and general apprehension of a God ; so that either there is in effect no God, or there is a Providence. For if he cannot take notice how things go in the World,

World, we cannot esteem him Wise.

If he sees how things go, but cannot help or hinder them, we cannot allow him to be powerful; and if he sees, and can help, but will not, men will have no apprehensions of him as either Just or Good.

But because we certainly conclude him to have all those perfections, when we acknowledge him to be a God, therefore he doth govern the World. And thus in short we have all the branches of Divine Providence, at once, demonstrated from his Nature and Being.

Secondly, My second Argument shall be from the Spirit of Prophecy, or from all those Predictions of things to come, which have been verified in real effects in any age of the World.

He that denies that any thing hath been foretold, and come to pass according to the Prediction, must deny the Faith and History of all the World; and he that grants such things, cannot avoid the acknowledgment of a Providence.

For it is evident, that he who certainly foretells what is to come, must see through all the series of causes that tend to the production of such an effect, and especially if he define the very precise time and other circumstances answering

swering to the accomplishment of the Event, his knowledge must be very accurate and intimate to the whole intrigue of causes. But above all, if he declare before-hand, not only what shall come to pass according to the course of natural and necessary causes, but even such things as are casual and contingent, and such as are subject to the liberty and indifferency of the will of man and free agents: Then (whether men be able or no to discover the secret manner and means of this fore-knowledge it matters not) it must be acknowledged, that he not only is privy to the Cabal, and sees the consultations and workings of these causes; but that he also governs the result and issues of them, which is that we here mean by a reigning Providence, as we before explained it.

Now all this matter of fact is evidently true in innumerable instances; amongst all which, I will only take notice of the Prediction of the deliverance of the Jews, first from their Egyptian Bondage, and then from the Babylonish Captivity.

In the former of these, the Event was foretold above 400 Years before it came to pass, and the accomplishment was exact to a very day, as you find it observed, *Exod. 12. 41, 42.*

the words are these, *And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the self same day it came to pass, that all the host of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt: it is a night to be much observed to the Lord; this is that night of the Lord, &c.*

In the other passage of Providence, viz. the Babylonish Captivity, it was foretold above Seventy Years before it came to pass, and in a time of the greatest unlikelihood of any such Calamity to befall them, namely, in the time of their greatest Prosperity; and the period of their Captivity was precisely determined to the just time of Seventy Years continuance, and then they were to be delivered and restored to their own Land again: and all these strange things were punctually and precisely fulfilled, as appears by comparing together *2 Chron. 36. 22. and Ezra 1. 1.*

In both which passages there are so many admirable circumstances, so great were the obstacles in the way of their accomplishment, and also so much of the will of man concerned in the whole case, that of necessity there must be a governing Power as well as a foresight in the bringing it about; in which two things lies the notion of a Providence. This is the Argument

Argument of *Tertullian*, *Prescientia* (or *Providentia*)
Deus tot habet testes, quot fecit Prophetas; i. e. Look
how many Prophets or Prophecies ever were
in the World, and so many infallible evidences
of a Providence.

Thirdly, My third Argument is from Miracles, or the several instances of Divine Interposition, either in raising and improving, or in depressing, suspending and altering the natural and ordinary course of second causes: For most assuredly, if ever the course of things hath been interrupted and brought into order again, there is plain evidence of a superiour Power and Management; forasmuch as it is not imaginable, that natural causes should go out of course of themselves, without their own decay and failure, and impossible that being once out of order (upon such decays and declensions) that ever they should recover themselves into their former order again; therefore if ever such a case hath happened, it must be the over-ruling hand of Providence.

Now, that there have such extraordinary things happened in the World, as this Argument supposes, the most Epicurean and Atheistical Wits do not altogether deny, but endeavour to find out some wise salvo or other for them,

upon natural Principles, in which enterprife they are^{as} much forsaken of all true Reason and Philosophy, as they are destitute of Devotion ; for to resolve that into natural causes, which is either above them, or contrary to them, is the greatest instance of humor and folly that can be assigned.

They will observe, perhaps, that in the Plagues of *Egypt*, or in some of the miracles done in the Wilderness, there was some appearance of natural causes; but besides that, those causes were apparently incompetent to the effects : there was also such a strange and sudden bringing of those causes together, as could not but bespeak an Almighty Power and Government.

But then let them try their skill to tell us, what natural causes made the Sun stand still in *Joshua's* time, or made that unnatural Eclipse at our Saviours Passion, when the two Luminaries were in Opposition. Or let them tell us, how men utterly unlearned (as the Apostles and other Primitive Disciples were) should be able to speak all kind of Languages on the sudden ? how incurable Diseases should be healed ? nay, men be raised from the Dead by a word speaking : in all these, and a thousand instances more, there is undeniably the interposition

position of the Divine Majesty, and so God governs the World.

Fourthly, and lastly, I argue for a Providence from the Conspiracy and Cooperation of all things that happen in the World, to a certain and uniform end, which cannot be without the direction and management of Divine Power and Wisdom.

Things that are and happen in the World (as we see plainly) have different natures, and various tendencies, nay sometimes run flatly cross to each other; but now if all those lines meet in the same point and center, if all apparent contrariety conspire to the same end, then there must be *Deus atq; monarchus*, a God in the World. For if things were either carried by blind and uncertain chance, it would be very strange, if they should not often clash and interfere; or if they be acted by their respective necessary causes, yet those causes being often contrary to each other, no one end can be jointly pursued and carried on between them; therefore when we see (all this contrariety notwithstanding) all things so attuned and adjusted, that they at last cooperate to one great purpose, *viz.* the glory of God, and the good of men; then it is apparent that they are subordinate to

one.

one great, and wise, and universal cause, which presides over the World.

There are an infinite number of noble instances of this kind in all History and Experience, such as the afflictions of *Joseph* in *Egypt*, which God turned into a Blessing to *Joseph*, to all his Fathers Family, to *Pharaoh*, and to all *Egypt*. Such was the drowning of *Jonas* in the bottom of the Sea, and his miraculous escape thence, which was made an effectual means to convince the Ninevites, that God sent him with that awakening Message. Thus the Persecutions of the Church, which in the first aspect, looked like the most effectual way to suppress Christian Religion, proved in the issue, the most successful method of propagating of it.

So the afflicted condition of good men in this World (upon a superficial view) looks as if virtue was under some malignant Planet, or that if any God minded it at all, it was only to discountenance and dishearten it; yet it proves nothing else in the conclusion, but a design to exercise, to try and confirm it, especially God so ordering the matter, that ordinarily the lives of such men are intermixed, and as it were checquered with Prosperity and Adversity; the latter

latter paring off their luxuriancy, and not suffering them to grow light and vain, and the former preserving them from melancholy and despondency; the one affording them ballast, and the other sails, that by the help of both together, they may steer an even course through the World towards Heaven.

This is the Argument of the Apostle, *Rom. 8. 29.* *All things work together for good, to them that love God, &c.* and that shall be my last Argument for this great Point; it were easie to add a great many more, but I think these fully sufficient.

3. I come now to the third and last thing I propounded, *viz.* to shew the eminent and signal advantages that mankind hath by being under such a Providence, that so they may be sensible what cause they have to rejoice that *the Lord reigneth*: And this I represent in the six following particulars.

First, The belief of such a Providence as we have proved, is the prime Pillar, and the very Basis and Foundation of all Religion; not only of this or that Religion in particular, but of Religion it self, and in the general notion of it. Forasmuch as the belief of a God, is by no means sufficient to support that great Fabrick,

brick, without this also of a Providence. For let a man not only acknowledge the Being and Existence of a Deity, but also let him look upon him as never so great and admirable in his nature; yet if he conceive of him as inactive, such an one as either cannot or will not trouble himself to take notice of mens carriage towards himself: in a word, if he neither reward nor punish, the great obligation to Religion is wanting; for the mere reverence of his excellent nature will be utterly ineffectual, either to keep a man steady and constant in the difficulties of a strict and devout life, or especially to restrain him from such sins, as both his temper is greatly prone to, and to which he hath the strong allurements of Pleasure and Profit; seeing such a man is sensible all along that he is (upon this supposition) as safe in despising and affronting, as in fearing and worshipping the Divine Majesty.

And therefore the Epicureans, for all their acknowledgment of a God, were reputed Atheistical by the wiser Sects of Philosophers, and that not unworthily; because (as I said before) they making him to enjoy his ease, and to be unconcerned in the affairs of the World, subverted Providence, and with it overthrew all the reason of Religion and Piety.

Nay

Nay further, suppose a Man should acknowledge not only a God but some kind of Providence also, yet unless it be such a Kingly Providence as we have before stated, it will signifie little or nothing to the purpose of Religion. For so we see the Stoicks acknowledged both : But forasmuch as they apprehended the Deity to be bound under the Iron Bonds of fatal and invincible necessity, so that though he was aware how it went with men, and might perhaps pity them in their distresses, yet could not help them ; they hereby cut the main Sinews of Vertue and Devotion.

But now upon supposition that God is not only a great and everlasting Being, but a powerful, wise and free Majesty, and that there is such a Kingly Providence as we assert ; then it is apparent that Vertue and Vice have vast differences, and Piety and Religion are the greatest concerns of Mankind. And therefore it is very observable, that this is the great Argument of the whole Old Testament, the main Doctrine of those times, and of all those Sacred Writings of *Moses* and the Prophets, to awaken the World into the belief of such a presence of God in, and superintendence over the World. But I proceed.

D

Secondly,

Secondly, Not only the Internal Reason and Obligation to Religion is founded upon Providence, but also the External Profession of Christian Religion in special, and the whole Society of a Church subsists by the support and protection of it.

Our Saviour hath told us he would *build his Church upon a Rock, and the Gates of Hell should not prevail against it*: But it is certain, that it is not the inherent strength of the Constitution of this Political Body his Church, which can maintain it in all times, and against all assaults; but the strong hand of Almighty Power that preserves it: otherwise it is not imaginable but it had been shattered to pieces long e're this day. For either the violence and cruelty of Persecution had dissipated it, or the contagion of evil Examples would have debauch'd it; or prophane Wit and Drollery would have laughed it out of countenance, or its own follies and Divisions would have crumbled it to nothing.

But Providence hath taken care, that neither the strength of its Enemies, nor its own weakness, neither their wit nor its foolishness, neither their combined malice and union, nor its own animosities and distractions, have had their (otherwise probable and) natural effects upon it.

And

And that this admirable event is not to be attributed to Chance, or any other causes, but is the mere effect of Divine Providence, will be evident by this further Observation, *viz.* That so long as any Church hath kept close to God, and approved it self to him and to the Laws of its Institution, so long it hath always been safe and flourishing, (at least if we except only the very infancy of the Christian Church and Religion, at which time it pleased the Divine Wisdom to work a greater Miracle of Providence than all the rest, in exposing his Church in so much weakness to such strength of opposition, and yet preserving it (as the Burning Bush) and thereby giving a more illustrious evidence to all the World of his Providence over it, than constant prosperity could have afforded.)

But contrariwise, whensoever this Church or any Branch or Member of it, hath by wantonness and self-confidence, by pride and schism, by hypocrisie or prophaneness, forfeited this Divine protection; if Divine patience and moderate chastisements have not in due time reclaimed it, it hath by a severe act of the same Providence been most remarkably delivered up to confusion and barbarism: God hath pulled
D 2 down

down his Fence, and the wild Beast of the Field spoils it, and the Boar out of the Woods devours it.

But lest any man who hath observed the horrible degeneracy, the hypocrisie and corruptions of the Church of *Rome*, and yet withal takes notice of the great pomp, splendor and prosperity which that Society enjoys, should make this an Objection against that which I am discoursing, I freely answer, That I think it hath pleased God to make that singular instance on purpose, and by an act of the same Providence by which he punishes other degenerate Churches, he hath kept up that debauched Church (just as he did those wicked and idolatrous Princes the Kings of *Babylon* and *Assyria*, &c.) to be a plague and a scourge whereby to chastise and reclaim other and better, but declining Churches.

In all other cases my Observation is abundantly verified; not only in the Church of the Jews, but in all those once famous Christian Churches of *Asia* and *Africa*. Which whilst they were humble and holy, true to their Principles, and worthy of Divine protection, so long they were happy and glorious: But when they had provoked God to desert them,
from

from that time it was neither their wit nor wealth nor learning, neither their numbers nor their reputation, neither their former zeal nor their Apostolical foundation, could preserve them from ruine and barbarism. I proceed further.

Thirdly, Divine Providence is the security and protection not only of the Church but of the State also. Of Kings and Princes, of Magistrates and Governours, and of Government it self: for it is not the *Satellites* of Princes, their Lifeguards that secure them, their Sword and Scepter that defends them, nor their purple and all the Ensigns of Majesty; but an all-seeing Providence over them, and an invisible Guard of Providence that protects them.

It was well observed by Sir *Francis Bacon*, that in some respects the condition of Crowned Heads and Sovereign Princes was more unhappy and uncomfortable than of meaner persons, and in this respect amongst the rest, because they have a great deal to fear, and little or nothing more to hope for in this World. They cannot go much higher, and they may fall a great deal lower. Other men if they have something to fear, yet they have a mighty sphere of hope to cheer and encourage them.

Princes

Princes have but little scope for their desires or ambitions, but on the other side, by reason of their long Train, ill Fortune hath great advantages against them. And indeed in these respects their condition were very melancholy, but that there is a Providence which watches over them, and prevents their fears, and their dangers.

They are God's Vicegerents, and He maintains and upholds them in their Offices under Himself; He strikes an awe and reverence of Magistrates into the hearts of Subjects, that an enraged multitude shall tremble at the sight of one man, and He in other respects like themselves, saving that he hath the Stamp and Character of Divine Authority upon him.

He that calms the raging of the Sea, and saith to the proud waves, *Hitherto shall ye go, and no further*; it is He also that stills the rage and madness of the people. Therefore *Psal. 99. 1. The Lord reigneth, be the people never so impatient; He sitteth between the Cherubims, be the Earth never so inquiet: i. e. The Divine Majesty hath that influence upon the spirits of men, that it is not all the brutal rage and passion, nor all the combined force of evil men, shall be able to dissolve Government, or interrupt*

terrapt that Order He hath constituted.

Let us take one great and famous instance of this, 2 Sam. 17. The people of *Israel* made a General Defection from *David* their King, and, as one man, were all for setting *Absolom* upon his Throne: The number of the Conspirators was as the Sand upon the Sea-shore, that in the expression of *Hushai* they were able to fall upon *David* and his Handful of men with him, as the Dew falls upon the Ground; and if he should betake himself to any City or Strong-hold, all *Israel* shall bring Ropes, and draw that City into the River; so that there shall not be one small Stone left. What becomes of *David* in this case? Who shall withstand this Torrent? Only Divine Providence, this divides the Waters, this dissolves that great black Cloud, and makes it fall in a gentle Dew (otherwise than *Hushai* intended) and the result is, That ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ the same men strive who shall be the first and forwardest in setting *David* upon his Throne again.

Therefore whatever Prince or Magistrate shall slight a Providence, they slight the best Fort of their Empire and Jurisdiction, they dismiss their Guards, and lay themselves open to all the follies and rage and insolencies of the people.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, Divine Providence is also the peoples caution and security against the weaknesses, passions and extravagances of Princes and Magistrates, so that they shall not need to resort to Arms or any seditious and unlawful means in their own defence. We use to appeal to an higher Court when we are oppress'd in an inferior Judicatory, and this is our proper refuge, when our Rights and Properties are invaded, to look up to God the supreme Potentate of the World, that he will restrain the exorbitances of his Ministers.

God is King of Kings, not only because he is above all other Princes, but because he restrains and controlls them, he makes and rules them, he invests and deinvests them. *Cujus jussu homines nascuntur, ejus jussu Reges constituuntur, aptique illis qui ab ipsis in illis temporibus regnantur,* said the great ~~man~~ Saint Irenaus. *He that made men makes Kings, and he fits and qualifies them for the times wherein, and the people over whom they reign.*

For it is He that can (amongst other instances of his transcendent Sovereignty) turn their hearts also. So Solomon himself a great and a wise King hath told us, *Prov. 21. 1. The heart of the King is in the hand of the Lord, and he turn-*
eth

eth it as the Rivers of Water ; that is, as an Husbandman or Gardiner, can by Drains and Trenches derive the Water from one place to another, to his use and purpose ; so doth God Almighty dispose and incline the hearts of Princes, be they never so strong and deep.

Cyrus was a mighty Prince, and had a heart as averse to the People of the Jews, and to their Religion also, as any of his Predecessors, that carried them into, or kept them in Captivity. What was the matter then? what reason of State was there that he should let them go, and lose so much People, and so much Tribute? nothing, but the Text tells us, *God stirred up the heart of Cyrus.*

Nebuchadnezzar was so stiff-necked and impious, as that he defied any such Providence over him as we are speaking of; but God turned his heart first to that of a Beast, and put him out to Grass till he had learned, that *the most high ruleth in the Kingdoms of men.*

It is therefore no deceitful or illusory method of security, to appeal to, and trust in Providence, in the greatest cases possible. It is true the safety of Religion, Liberty and Property are mighty concerns; but certainly they are not too great a stake to trust in the hands of God, who

we see, both can secure them, and is obliged by the honour and interest of his own supereminent Government to be tender of them, against all the Arbitrary Invasions of those under him.

But perhaps some man will suspect, that it will look like Cowardise, if not Treachery (in confidence of a Providence) to neglect other means of security; and that it will be like him in the Fable, that lay in the Ditch, and used no endeavour to get out, but only cried to God to help him: To which I answer, that if the Providence of God have afforded us other means that are lawful and warranted by the standing Law and Rule of his Word, we tempt God if we neglect them, when those great Interests are indangered; but unless the means we use be as certainly and manifestly lawful and warrantable, as the cause we pretend to, shall be just and honourable, we shall but provoke Providence instead of subserving it. We forego our greatest security by not being contented with it; for by superseding Providence we alienate it, and by shifting for our selves we fight against God.

Fifthly, Providence is our security against private Fears as well as publick, against solitude and dangers of all kinds, whether by ill accidents

accidents and encounters from Brute Beasts, or more Brutish men.

Man is a very feeble creature, and impotent for his own defence in a thousand cases that happen every day ; it were therefore a most melancholy condition of life, if we were not under the shelter of a Providence, if we had no Patron, if there were not a Superiour Genius, an higher nature continually solicitous about us for our protection : And therefore the well known Gentleman of *Malmſbury* might well be timorous and afraid that every man should have designs to kill him, or that every accident might take away his life, for the man did not well believe in a God above, nor had any confidence in a Providence.

And indeed such a case is so sad and deplorable, that it seems to be a very silly thing to desire to live if it were true: A man had better dye once than live in perpetual fears of dying ; and nothing but childish cowardize could tempt a man to wish to live one day, if he were confident there was no such thing as a Providence.

But if I believe there is a God that over-looks me where-ever I am, that is tender of me, that can and will preserve me as long as he sees good, in spite of all evil designs or acci-

dents : this erects a mans mind and fortifies his spirits ; this suffers him neither to fear nor to wish for death, but enables him both to live patiently, and to dye bravely.

And consequently of this, the trust in a Providence is the great encouragement of all generous enterprises and performances ; and these, whether they be publick or private, if a man design a secret good thing, what can be the inducement to it ? where can be the wisdom of giving himself the trouble about it, when he can expect no reward in this World, because the performance is kept secret from the notice of men ; and if there be no Providence, it is certain there can be no reward in another World, and so his labour is wholly lost.

But if it be a publick action he designs, he shall be sure to meet with those will envy and malign him, a second sort will suspect him, and a third will traduce and defame him ; and amongst the rest there will not want those that will find it to be their interest to oppose and hinder him : so that in short, without a special hand of Providence, no man shall have either the heart to undertake, or the power and success to effect any noble action ; but grant this great point, and men are
born

born above envy, opposition, and even above themselves.

I cannot upon this occasion forbear to take notice of a noble and memorable passage of the Roman Orator, in one of his Orations to the Senate of Rome, his words begin thus, *Quàm volumus licet, patres conscripti, nos amemus; tamen nec numero Hispanos, nec viribus Gallos, nec calliditate Pœnos, nec doctrina Græcos, &c.* the sense of the whole is to this effect, as if he had said, Fathers of the Senate, let us entertain as good an opinion of our selves as we will or can; yet it must be acknowledged, that we neither equal the Spaniards in numbers, nor the Gauls in strength and stature, nor the Carthaginians in craft and subtilty, nor the Greeks in learning and knowledge; and yet it is as certain, we have overcome and triumphed over all these Nations: Now inquiring into the reason of this success, I can attribute it to no other cause, nor give any more probable account of it than this; namely, that we live under a better and a quicker sense of a God and a Providence than any of them do, and this, and this alone gives us all the advantage.

Sixthly, But Sixthly and lastly, and to speak summarily, Providence is of unspeakable advantage

tage and influence upon the spirits of men, both in prosperity and adversity. It may seem indeed, that whilst a man is in prosperity, he is in no need of a Providence; and it is too commonly true, that men do not use to think much of God whilst all goes well with them. Nevertheless this practice however general, is very foolish and unreasonable; for besides the uncertainty of worldly Prosperity, and that nothing is more ordinary than for mens fortunes to be soon at a stand, for all their broad sails and most earnest endeavours, if once the wind of Providence desert them: Besides this (I say) it deserves the most serious consideration, that all worldly Prosperity is very little worth (even whilst it lasts) if there be no Providence. For what great joy or contentment can the greatest affluence afford a man, if all come by mere chance, or the course of the Stars, or by fate or any such indiscriminating causes. But on the other side, if a man can look upon his comforts, as the gifts and favours of a wise and a good God, then and then only they are comfortable indeed.

And then for a state of adversity, that is sad indeed if there be no Providence; think what it is to be in a storm at Sea, where the Winds
roar,

roar, the Sea rages, the Ship cracks, no Anchor-hold, no Shores to land upon, no comfort in Pilot or Governours of the Vessel, nothing but a prospect of death every way ; if a man cannot look up to Heaven, and have hope in God, what a case is he in ? Or suppose a man be close Prisoner, and denied the comfort of his friends, together with other refreshments of life, or confined to a sick-bed, or be buried alive with obloquy and reproach ; in a word, that a man be friendless and helpless ; now if it can be said to such a man, there is no help for him in God neither, here is the very quintessence of misery, a case sad beyond expression : But contrariwise, if a man in all the dismal circumstances aforesaid, shall yet firmly believe a Providence that orders all things well and wisely, that can if he please bring a man out of all those difficulties, that certainly will make all these work for his good, and at last judge righteous judgment, and make him amends in another World ; then is any condition in the mean time very tolerable whatsoever it be.

And thus I have, I hope, performed the three things I promised from my Text ; and what remains now, but that we make Application of
all

all to our selves, and that in these two instances :

1. By setting this great Doctrine in our minds. And,

2. By improving it in our hearts to all the comfortable consequences aforesaid.

First, Let us settle this truth in our minds, that God Almighty exercises a Kingly Providence in and over all the World ; and let it (if it be possible) be a principle with us firm as a first notion, and indisputable as the verdict of our Senses : my meaning is, let nothing make us stagger or be able to shake our belief of that which is of so vast consequence to us. Forasmuch as without this Persuasion, not only our Religion is nonsense, but we are the most abject and pitiable Creatures in the World.

Brutes and other inferiour Creatures have indeed no apprehension of a Providence, and yet enjoy themselves in proportion to their natures ; but then this is to be considered, they foresee nothing, they suspect nothing, and so do not torment themselves before the time. But man suspects dangers where they may not come, and foresees them when they are coming, is a sagacious and jealous Creature, and
so

so anticipates calamities, and accumulates them. Now if there be no Providence, his condition is worse than that of inferiour Beings, he is doubly miserable, and that without remedy.

¶ Shall then a trifling Epicurean objection, nay, shall a Sceptical surmise, or a flash of Wit and Drollery, baffle us out of that wisdom in the honour of our natures consists, and upon which all our comfort depends?

Laugh at and scorn them that laugh at a Providence, poor pitiful wretches that worship blind fortune, or a manacled and fettered Deity, bound hand and foot by fatal necessity: Our God is a wise and good and free Agent, restrained, limited by nothing, but his own Wisdom. He sees all things without difficulty or deception, manages all things without fatigue or weariness, governs all things with just order, judges without partiality, pities in all adversity, can relieve in all necessity, and with unspeakable glory rewards those that faithfully serve him.

And pursuant of this belief let us in the Second place raise our affections to the highest pitch of triumph, let us make a shout as in the Text, *The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice, let the multitude of the Isles be glad thereof:* Or

as you have it in the 10. Verse of the Psalm immediately foregoing, *Tell it out amongst the heathen that the Lord reigneth.*

Let all foreign Nations, and all foreign Churches, all that have good will, and all that have ill will to our Religion, or to our Country, know that *the Lord is King*, and that we trust not to the number of our Forces, or the Wisdom of our Counsels, our Seas, or our Rocks, our Courage or Conduct, but to our King, to that Divine Providence which watches over us:

Let our Prince and our Magistrates take courage against the rage or the follies, the numbers or combinations of evil men, in consideration that they are the instruments of Divine Providence, the Lieutenants of Gods Government, and he that set them in office under himself, will stand by them, and bear them out in discharge of their trust and duty.

Let the People be quiet, not listen to noise and rumours, but be sure to banish all disloyal thoughts of resorting to irregular means for the asserting their pretensions. Is not God in the World? hath any one wrested the Scepter out of his hand? why then should we not trust in him?

When

When Philip Melancthon, otherwise a very wise and peaceable and mild-spirited person, began to be out of humour with the then state of the World, Luther addresses to him in these words, *Exorandus est Philippus ut desinat esse rector Mundi*; q. d. Good Brother Philip let God alone to govern the World.

Let the Oppressed, the Widow, the Fatherless and Friendless take comfort, for he that sitteth in the Throne will judge righteous judgment, and first or last *avenge the cause of his meanest Subject.*

Nay, let the man that is tempted and assaulted by the Devil, hold his ground, and fear nothing, for God is above the Devil.

To conclude, let us all lay aside our fears and our jealousies, our sighs and complaints, our melancholy and despondency, *Is there not a balm in Gilead, is there no Physician there, Jer. 8. 22.* Have we not a Wise and a Powerful, a Glorious and a good Prince, why then should we murmur? why accuse his Reign? why reproach his Government?

Novum seditionis genus oritur ex silentio, said the Historian; A sullen uncomfortableness and dislike of our condition, our discontent with the state of affairs, is a kind of Sedition against

36 *A Sermon Preached, &c.*

Heaven, our murmuring is no better than a libelling of Gods Government.

Wherefore (to say no more) let us stick close to this God, this mighty Potentate; let us hope, trust, and rejoice in him, and he shall bless our King, our Church, our Magistrates, and all our Concerns.

Now to this Universal Monarch of the World, this King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, be all Glory and Praise, Worship and Adoration World without End.

THE END.

E R R A T A.

PAG. 12. l. 2. r. *are* as p. 21. l. 14. r. *all-seeing eye of*
p. 24. l. 19. r. *great Saint.*

*Books written by the Reverend Doctor
Goodman, and sold by R. Roy-
ston, at the Angel in Amen-Corner.*

THE *Penitent Pardoned*; Or, A Discourse
of the Nature of Sin, and the Efficacy
of Repentance, under the Parable of
the Prodigal Son. The Second Edition Cor-
rected and Enlarged.

A Sermon preached at *Bishops-Stortford*, Au-
gust 29. 1677. before the Right Reverend
Father in God *Henry Lord Bishop of London*,
at his Lordship's Primary Visitation.

A Serious and Compassionate Enquiry into
the *Causes* of the present Neglect and Contempt of
the Protestant Religion and Church of Eng-
land.

A Sermon preached before the Right, Ho-
nourable Sir *Robert Clayton* Lord Mayor, and
the

the Aldermen of the City of London, at the
Guild-Hall-Chapel, Jan. xxv. 1679.

A Sermon preached before the Right Honourable Sir *John Moore* Lord Mayor, and the Aldermen of the City of London, at the *Guild-Hall-Chapel*, Decemb. 18. 1681.

The Interest of Divine Providence in the Government of the World. A Sermon preached before the Right Honourable Sir *William Pritchard* Lord Mayor, and the Aldermen of the City of London, at the *Guild-Hall-Chapel*, February the 11th. 1682.

